

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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46

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

SCS-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 SY-10 RSR-01

/113 W

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O P 161605 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8869

INFO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY

AMCONSUL DURBAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 889

DEPT PASS USIA/ IAA

CAPTE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, ZA, RH

SUBJ: AMERICAN CITIZENS FIRED ON AT VICTORIA FALLS

REF: LUSAKA 880

1. EMBOFF SPOKE WITH CAROL CARRUTHERS, WIFE OF WOUNDED AMCIT JOHN CARRUTHERS, BY PHONE AT WANKIE HOSPITAL, RHODESIA. SHE SAID HUSBAND WAS TO BE OPERATED ON TO REMOVE BULLET FROM STOMACH THIS AFTERNOON; DOES NOT BELIEVE HIS CONDITION SERIOUS. ASKED THAT HER PARENTS, MR. AND MRS. JAMES F. WRIGHT, 535 N. DORSET ROAD, TROY, OHIO, TEL 513-335-7458, BE INFORMED WHAT HAS
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HAPPENED AND THAT WRIGHTS INFORM HUSBAND'S MOTHER. ALSO TELL WRIGHTS MRS. CARRUTHERS WILL TELEPHONE THEM ASAP.

2. MRS. CARRUTHERS PROVIDED FOLLOWING DETAILS OF INCIDENT. IN EARLY AFTERNOON MAY 15 THE TWO CARRUTHERS AND TWO CANADIAN GIRLS HIKE DOWN TRAIL ON RHODESIAN SIDE INTO RIVER GORGE. WHEN OPPOSITE POWER STATION ON ZAMBIAN SIDE, THEY NOTICED WHAT APPEARED TO BE WORKMEN OUTSIDE. SOON AFTERWARDS FIRING FROM ZAMBIAN SIDE STARTED FOR NO APPARENT REASON. AMCITS AND CANADIANS BECAME SEPARATED AS THEY SOUGHT COVER BEHIND BOULDERS. MR. CARRUTHERS APPARENTLY HIT IN FIRST VOLLEY. BELIEVES CANADIANS MAY HAVE BEEN HIT LATER IN AFTERNOON AS FIRING CONTINUED SPORADICALLY FROM 2:00 TO 5:00 AND MISS SINCLAIR'S BODY FOUND SOME DISTANCE FROM WHERE THEY ORIGINALLY STANDING. UNABLE TELL WHO WAS FIRING, MAY HAVE BEEN ONLY ONE PERSON. WHEN THEY FAILED TO RETURN, THEIR FRIENDS (3 BRITISH, 1 SOUTH AFRICAN) REPORTED THEM MISSING. SEARCH PARTY LOCATED THEM ABOUT 11:00 P. M. HELICOPTER BROUGHT CARRUTHERS UP LATE THIS MORNING.

3. CHARGE AND CONSUL CALLED TO MOFA THIS AFTERNOON. OFFICIAL SAID ZAMBIAN TROOPS HAVE BEEN UNDER STRICT INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO FIRE ON CIVILIANS ON RHODESIAN SIDE OF RIVER. WILL TRY FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED. INDICATED ZAMBIANS WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH HUMANITARIAN RESCUE OPERATIONS ON RHODESIAN SIDE. WE RELATED TO OFFICIAL MRS. CARRUTHERS' VERSION OF INCIDENT.

4. WE HAVE HAD NO FURTHER CONTACT WITH O'DONNELL IN SALISBURY. HOWEVER, HE PHONED CANADIAN HICOM THIS AFTERNOON SAYING RHODESIANS WOULD NOT ATTEMPT BRING UP MISS SINCLAIR'S BODY UNTIL HICOM OBTAINED AN ASSURANCE FROM GRZ THAT RHODESIANS WOULD NOT BE FIRED ON. CANADIANS HAVE INFORMED MOFA OF THIS.

5. RADIO RHODESIA NEWS 1315 LOCAL FEATURED SHOOTING STORY, CLAIMING AUTOMATIC WEAPONS USED. ADDED RHODESIA HAD INFORMED U. S. CONSUL LUSAKA WHO "UNDERTOOK TO WARN THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT NOT RPT NOT TO INTERFERE WITH RESCUE OPERATIONS" (SIC). BROADCAST ALSO CARRIED FOR FIRST TIME TEXT OF NOTE RHODESIA CLAIMED IT HAD SENT ZAMBIA. NOTE SAID INCIDENT OCCURRED AT 1410 LOCAL MAY 15 WHEN FOUR TOURISTS FIRED ON FROM ZAMBIAN SIDE IN FOURTH GORGE. ON CANADIAN GIRL HIT AND FELL INTO RIVER, OTHER KILLED AND ONE AMERICAN WOUNDED. NOTE STATED RHODESIA "DEEPLY DEPLORED
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CALLOUS AND FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS," AND PROTESTED IN STRONGEST TERMS "INDISCRIMINATE KILLING AND MAIMING." CALLED ON GRZ TO BRING "PERPETRATORS OF THIS MURDEROUS ATTACK TO JUSTICE."

6. FOLLOWING MEETING PRESIDENT HELD THIS AFTERNOON WITH SPECIAL

ASSISTANT MARK CHONA AND MOFA PERMSEC MEEBELO, GRZ ISSUED FOLLOWING STATEMENT AT ABOUT 4 P. M. LOCAL: BEGIN TEXT: FOLLOWING REPORTS FROM SALISBURY AND APPROACHES MADE BY THE CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION AND THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN LUSAKA ABOUT THE INCIDENT IN WHICH SOME PEOPLE ARE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN FIRED ON BY ZAMBIAN TROOPS, THE ZAMBIAN SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE ALLEGED INCIDENT IS BEING INVESTIGATED. END TEXT.

7. IN ABSENCE FOREIGN MINISTER WHO IN ADDIS, CHARGE HAS APPOINTMENT WITH MEEBELO TOMORROW MORNING MAY 17 TO URGE MOST CAREFUL AND THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF INCIDENT AND, AS POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE TO THAT INVESTIGATION, INFORM HIM OF MRS. CARRUTHERS VERSION AS SHE GAVE IT TO US ON PHONE TODAY.

8. WILL ADVISE FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.
NELSON

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NMAFVVZCZ

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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BLANTYRE
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GABORONE
JOHANNESBURG

OTTAWA
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